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## HANDOUT 13-1

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### ***GUIDELINES FOR BEING A GOOD LISTENER***

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- Concentrate on understanding what the person is saying — **not** on thinking of how you want to respond to what the person is saying.
- Don't interrupt.
- Show that you are interested:
  - Look at the other person — make eye contact
  - Nod your head, make small comments or sounds to show you are listening (*"Ah"...."Oh no!"*, etc.).
- Listen to **more** than the person's words. Watch body language to gather more information about how the person is feeling.
- Show that you are trying to understand:
  - Ask questions to make sure you understand what the other person is saying, or to get more information
  - You can also clarify by trying to restate what the person has said in other words: *"So you mean, he didn't follow through, even though he promised to?"*

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## **HANDOUT 13-2**

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### ***LISTENING TO JANE***

#### **SITUATION**

You are with your friend Jane. Jane has a drinking problem, but she hasn't recognized that yet. But her boss at work has just told her if she misses any more time off the job, she'll lose her job. Jane is upset and wants to tell you about what's happened.

#### **INSTRUCTIONS**

Develop two role-plays of Jane's conversation with her friend. In one of the role-plays, the person playing Jane's friend (the listener) should apply the Guidelines for Good Listening. In the other role-play, the listener should fail to apply those guidelines.

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## HANDOUT 13-3

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### ***LISTENING TO DAVID***

#### **SITUATION**

Your 18-year-old younger brother, David, has always been a good kid. He does pretty well at school, and he hasn't given your parents the kind of trouble you did. Lately however, David's started coming home late when he's out at night, and having trouble getting up the next morning. You've been concerned that he's drinking, but you didn't think he would, since he knows the problems you've had in your life because of that. Last night, you heard him throwing up after he got home, so you're now pretty sure he was drinking. When David gets up in the morning, he says he needs to talk to you.

#### **INSTRUCTIONS**

Develop two role-plays of David's conversation with his brother. In one of the role-plays, the person playing the older brother (the listener) should apply the Guidelines for Good Listening. In the other role-play, the listener should fail to apply those guidelines.

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## HANDOUT 13-4

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### ***LISTENING TO RICHARD***

#### **SITUATION**

You are with your friend Richard. Richard is a member of AA and has had his drinking problem under control for many years now. But he is under tremendous stress right now. His wife of 20 years just left him two days ago, and he feels desperate. He's so upset that he's been tempted to drink again. You and Richard are having coffee together, when he tells you about how he's feeling.

#### **INSTRUCTIONS**

Develop two role-plays of Richard's conversation with his friend. In one of the role-plays, the person playing Richard's friend (the listener) should apply the Guidelines for Good Listening. In the other role-play, the listener should fail to apply those guidelines.

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## HANDOUT 13-5

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### ***JANE AND HER BOSS***

Jane's boss, Chris, needs to have a talk with Jane. Chris likes Jane, and thinks she's been a good worker until recently. But lately, Jane's made far too many serious mistakes. Chris thinks the problems with her work have been caused by her drinking. Jane's never said it was a problem, but recently Chris has smelled alcohol on Jane's breath while she's been at work, and Jane's been late and missed a lot of work also.

Chris needs to talk to Jane about the situation. How do you think Jane will react, based on each of these opening statements?

#### **OPENING STATEMENT 1**

Jane, you are really screwing up these days. We've got to talk about why you are making such a mess of things.

#### **OPENING STATEMENT 2**

Jane, I'm really concerned about your performance recently.

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## HANDOUT 13-6

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### ***“I FEEL” VERSUS “YOU ARE” MESSAGES***

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#### **“YOU ARE” MESSAGES**

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**Example: Jane, you are really screwing up these days.**

“You Are” messages make people feel personally attacked. When people feel attacked, they want either to defend themselves, or to escape. People often:

- Defend themselves by “fighting back” with an angry or aggressive comments
- Escape by not listening, or by ending the conversation.

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#### **“I FEEL” MESSAGES**

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**Example: Jane, I’m really concerned about your performance.**

“I Feel” messages focus on what the speaker is feeling. They deal with a person’s behavior, instead of being directed against the person him or herself. Because of this, most people are able to receive “I Feel” messages more openly than they would a “You Are” message.

### **EXAMPLES**

22 year old Marc wants to open a conversation with his 18-year-old brother Clarence. He is concerned because he believes Clarence has been drinking.

- **“You Are” Message:** Clarence, you are so destructive! If you continue drinking, you’re going to get into serious trouble.
- **“I Feel” Message:** Clarence, I’m very worried because I think you’ve started drinking, and I know better than anyone what kind of trouble that can bring.

Walter’s friend Richard wants to open a conversation with him. He’s afraid Richard, who has been depressed since his wife left him, will start drinking again.

- **“You Are” Message:** Richard, man, you are a relapse waiting to happen. You gotta get a grip, man.
- **“I Feel” Message:** Richard, I know you’ve been pretty down lately. Do you want to talk about it ? Because I’m worried that if you don’t...you might fall into some bad old patterns.

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## HANDOUT 13-7

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### **INSTRUCTIONS**

#### **PART ONE**

1. Your group should write a scenario in which Person A needs to start a conversation with Person B. The subject Person A is going to raise is one that Person B might become upset about. (*For example, Person A might want to discuss the impact Person B's drinking is having on Person B's children.*)

The scenario you write should describe the situation Person A wants to deal with, and should include Person A's opening sentence. That opening sentence should be either an "I Feel" or a "You Are" message. The scenario should end right after that sentence.

Here's an example of the kind of scenario you should write: *Mike is concerned about his friend Woody, and about Woody's kids. Woody has been drinking a lot lately, and when he drinks too much he gets very loud, drops things, and sometimes passes out. Mike has seen Woody do this when his children are around, and he's noticed that the children are scared of Woody's behavior. He decides he has to raise the issue with Woody. One afternoon when they're together, he says: "Woody, man, you are really being a lousy parent these days."*

2. Decide who is going to play the characters, and then prepare a brief role-play that starts with the opening sentence you wrote (which will be either an "I Feel" or "You Are" message). Show how the conversation develops after that first sentence. Group members who aren't in the role-play should still contribute ideas and make suggestions to those doing the role-play.

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#### **PART TWO**

3. Go back to your scenario, and CHANGE THE OPENING LINE of the conversation. If your group's scenario featured an "I Feel" message change it to a "You Are" message. If your group's scenario featured a "You Are" message, change it to an "I Feel" message.
4. Prepare a second role-play based on the scenario with your re-written first line.